

14 June 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR:

1. This memorandum is for information only:

2. Andy Berding, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, gave an informal address today at the YWCA (correct) at a Government Public Information luncheon. His subject: "Thinking Out Loud on Public Affairs". Lincoln White, Chief of News Division, State Department, who was to have introduced Berding arrived too late to do so. Abbott Washburn, USIA, was one of the guests. I had John O'Brien, Chief of Washington Bureau, The PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER, as my guest.

3. Berding's high-lights were:

The "unfavorable" will always get Press play over a "favorable" news story. It's human nature.

One Washington columnist says he takes an anti-Government attitude on all subjects so as to "balance" the news, since he considers himself in competition with the large "Governmental press corps".

The commercial media -- press, radio, etc. -- should be given the story because they are not "suspect" as is a Government, and stories media use get the widest dissemination and greatest acceptance by the public.

Not enough attention is paid in Washington to foreign correspondents -- nor by the U.S. to correspondents abroad. These people use their employer's funds to pay for their cables so their papers, radio, etc. will use what they send.

State has, as has USIA, difficulty at times in its use of words and expressions because words mean different things in different places to different people.

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Example: State has an East-West affairs office; it does not mean that the West is opposing Eastern countries -- but East to us means Soviet Russia but not to people overseas. (No one asked why State hasn't changed the title). "Socialism" in the USSR means "communism" -- but not so in America. India calls itself a Socialist country.

The Soviet reacts more quickly than we do to statements against them. Example: John Foster Dulles talked to The Associated Press Editors in New York, criticizing some Soviet plans; when he reached his office in Washington, some two hours later, the wire services had already carried the Soviet reply. We should be quicker on our feet, he said.

He is against "leaks" and feeding news to favored individuals or publications.

He is for "background" conference but such meetings must not be used to release "spot" news. They must be solely for explanation of why -- ie. background.

We are getting more exchanges with the Soviet Union in persons, like agriculturists and construction people, than heretofore.

State sometime ago offered the Soviet Union to exchange once a month half-hour information programs, using records, but the Soviet did not accept. Some 17 plans were offered and only some four or five were accepted by the USSR.

He paid praise to his former employer, the USIA.

Returning to the difficulty in the use of words he said that a Burmese student, now in Washington, at a recent get-together with Americans, was "making time" with an American girl and he wanted her to know he liked her, so he said, "when I see you and talk with you my heart goes cold." She

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walked away. A friend explained he should have said his heart "warmed".
The Burmese said in Burma it is so hot one is complimented when the heart
goes "cold".

In Atlanta, Georgia, recently, he said, Linc White gave a talk. He was
asked, "How do you distinguish between John Foster Dulles and Dean Acheson?"
with but a second's hesitancy, he answered:

"Dean Acheson is a tall man with a black mustache."

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